



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 167

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2021

No. 39

Senate

(Legislative day of Monday, March 1, 2021)

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, restore us and bring us back to You. Give us back the joy we once felt in Your presence. By Your mercies, we have navigated through dangers, toils, and snares. Mighty God, You have been faithful.

Today, give our Senators the wisdom to seek Your guidance. May they daily read Your Word to find light for the road ahead. Lord, help them to experience the certainty that comes from embracing Your precepts. Inspired by reverence for You, may they find and stay on the right path.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 2, 2021.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNOCK thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to legislative session.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, today, the Senate continues its steady progress in improving highly qualified nominees to serve in the executive branch. Last night, the Senate confirmed Dr. Miguel Cardona as the Secretary of Education, fulfilling President Biden's promise to elevate someone with public school experience. Gina Raimondo will soon become the former Governor of Rhode Island as she prepares to take on the top job at the Commerce Department. Pending the Senate's approval, Dr. Cecilia Rouse will soon become the Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers.

This morning, I want to pause for a moment to recognize the historic nature of the nominees whom President

Biden has nominated and the Senate has confirmed in the first month of the Nation's administration.

So far, the Senate has promoted the first Black Secretary of Defense and the first woman to serve as Deputy Secretary of Defense.

After an unbroken streak of 77 male Secretaries in a row, all the way back to Alexander Hamilton, the Senate confirmed the first woman to serve as Treasury Secretary.

By the end of the day, we will have confirmed the first Black woman to lead the Council of Economic Advisers, the first Latino and first immigrant to lead the Department of Homeland Security, the second Black woman to serve as U.N. Ambassador, the third Latino to serve as Education Secretary, and the first openly gay Secretary of any Cabinet Agency.

Cabinet Agencies, we all know, have an immense influence over the policy of the United States. It is critical for their leaders to have lived experiences that represent the broad spectrum of Americans those Agencies serve. Not only that, but the nominees I just mentioned are some of the most qualified public servants in America and are already hard at work at delivering results for the American people.

The Senate will continue to confirm more nominees as quickly as possible. The process can certainly move more quickly with the cooperation of our Republican colleagues, whose States and constituents benefit equally from having these qualified nominees in place.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on COVID-19, as early as tomorrow, the Senate will begin work on the American Rescue Plan. As the country faces a series of historic challenges, we must meet the moment with a historic response.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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